United Nations S/PV.3738

Security Council
Fifty-second Year

Provisional

3738th Meeting
Friday, 7 February 1997, 4.10 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Mahugu	(Kenya)
Members:	Chile	Mr. Searle
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	Costa Rica	Mr. Sáenz
	Egypt	Mr. Awaad
	France	Mr. Ladsous
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Cabral
	Japan	Mr. Owada
	Poland	Mr. Matuszewski
	Portugal	Mr. Soares
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Choi
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Sweden	Mr. Liden
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Richmond
	United States of America	Mr. Inderfurth

Agenda

The situation in the Great Lakes region

97-85135 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 4.10 p.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President: As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of February, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Hisashi Owada, Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of January 1997. I am sure I speak for all members of the Security Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Owada for the great diplomatic skill with and unfailing courtesy which he conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Great Lakes region

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Zaire, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Khabouji N'Zaji (Zaire) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to the following documents: S/1997/13 and S/1997/98, letters dated 6 January and 1 February 1997, respectively, from the Chargé d'affaires *ad interim* of the Permanent Mission of Zaire to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; S/1997/94, letter dated 29 January 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the text of the communiqué issued at the end of the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Cameroon, the Congo, Kenya, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe on the current situation in the Great Lakes region, held in Pretoria on 27 and 28 January 1997; S/1997/97, letter dated 30 January 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Uganda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; and S/1997/109, letter dated 4 February 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council expresses its grave concern at the deteriorating situation in the Great Lakes region, in particular Eastern Zaire, and at its humanitarian consequences on the refugees and inhabitants of the region. It calls for an end to the hostilities and the withdrawal of all external forces, including mercenaries.

"The Security Council also expresses its deep concern over the humanitarian crisis in the region and urges all parties to allow humanitarian agencies and organizations access to deliver humanitarian assistance to those in need. It also demands that the parties ensure the safety of all refugees and displaced persons as well as the security and freedom of movement of all United Nations and humanitarian personnel. It underlines the obligation of all concerned to respect the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law.

"The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Zaire and other States in the Great Lakes region; and to the principle of the inviolability of borders. In this connection, the Council calls upon all the States in the region to refrain, in accordance with their obligations under the Charters of the United Nations and the Organization of the African Unity, from any act, including cross-border incursions, which would threaten the sovereignty and territorial integrity of any State and exacerbate the situation in the region, including endangering the refugees and displaced persons. It also calls upon these States to create the conditions necessary for the speedy and peaceful resolution of the crisis.

"The Security Council expresses its full support for the joint United Nations/Organization of African Unity Special Representative for the Great Lakes region, Ambassador Mohammed Sahnoun, in the fulfilment of his mandate as set out in the letter of the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council dated 22 January 1997 (S/1997/73). It urges all parties in the region to cooperate fully with the mission of the Special Representative in the search for a peaceful settlement to the crisis and calls upon Member States to provide the Special Representative with all necessary support, including logistical support. It also encourages other facilitators and representatives of the regional organizations, including the European Union and the States concerned, to coordinate closely their efforts with those of the Special Representative.

"The Security Council reaffirms the importance of holding an international conference on peace, security and development in the Great Lakes region under the auspices of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity.

"The Security Council welcomes all efforts, including those of the Organizations and States of the region, aimed at resolving the crisis and, in particular, the initiative of President Daniel arap Moi of Kenya and other Heads of State, and encourages them to continue their efforts.

"The Security Council will remain seized of the matter."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/1997/5.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.